

Middle School Orientation, Get Connected and Connect & Assess

Presenters:

Nate Swenson, Assistant Superintendent

Dr. Cara Rieckenberg, Principal of Highlands Elementary

Tricia Pettis, Principal of South View Middle School

Jenn Carter, Assistant Principal, Edina High School



DEFINING EXCELLENCE

First Week of School



TOPIC 1:

Mission/Vision &
Strategic Initiatives

TOPIC 2:

Orientation, Get Connected
Middle School and High School

TOPIC 3:

Connect & Assess
Highlands Elementary





Vision/Mission & Strategic Initiatives





For *each and every student* to
DISCOVER their possibilities
and thrive





EDINA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

is a *dynamic* learning community
delivering educational *excellence*
and preparing all students to
realize their full potential





Our **MISSION**

Through academics, activities, and opportunities, we encourage creativity, foster curiosity, and develop critical thinking skills.

We support every student's educational journey by creating a caring and inclusive school culture that supports the whole student.

Edina Strategic Initiatives



Strategy B: Ensure an Equitable and Inclusive School Culture

2. Create a school culture that enhances learning and fosters a sense of belonging for all students through our values of Integrity, Compassion, Courage, Commitment, Appreciation and Responsibility.

Strategy C: Foster Positive Learning Environment and Whole Student Support

4. Create environments that are conducive to learning and facilitate constructive student interaction.

Edina Strategic Initiatives



Strategy E: Engage Parents, Schools and Community

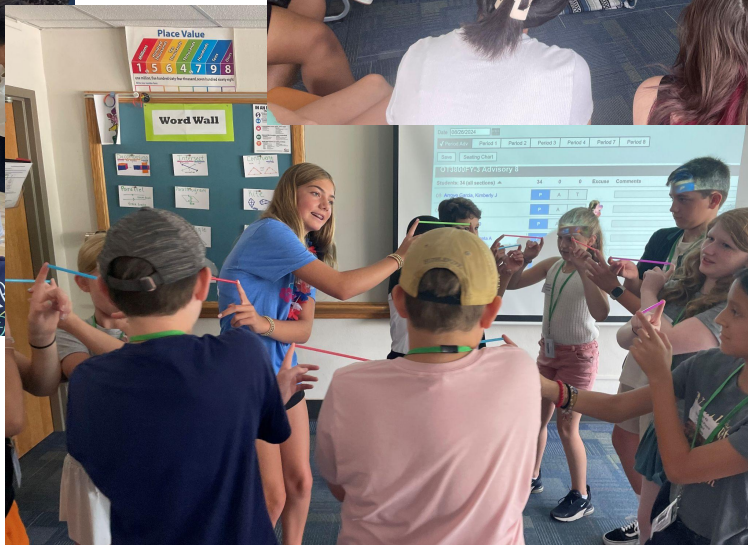
1. Provide engagement opportunities and information about Edina Public Schools to the community so that all community members feel connected and know how to contribute to our collective success.
4. Develop and maintain a culture of continuous improvement based on evidence.



**Orientation Day
and Get
Connected**

Middle School Orientation Day

Tricia Pettis

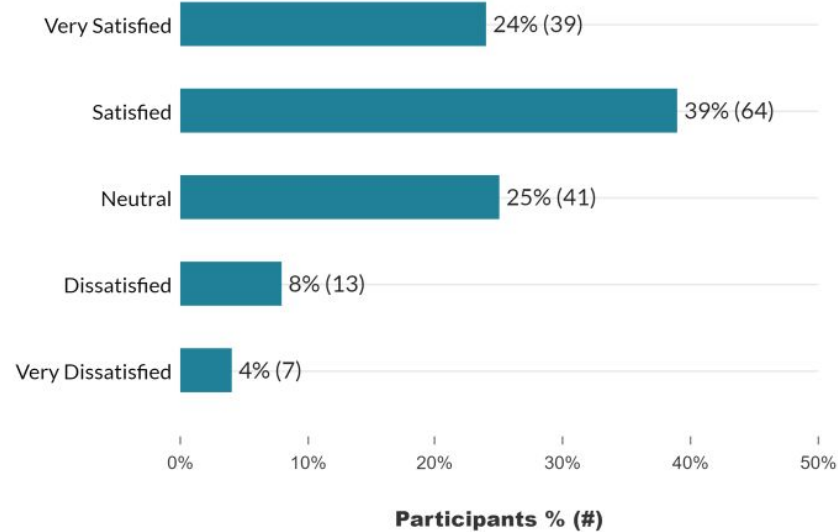


Get Connected - Jenn Carter



PARTICIPATION Breakdown of Participation

How satisfied were you with the overall EHS Get Connected Day experience?

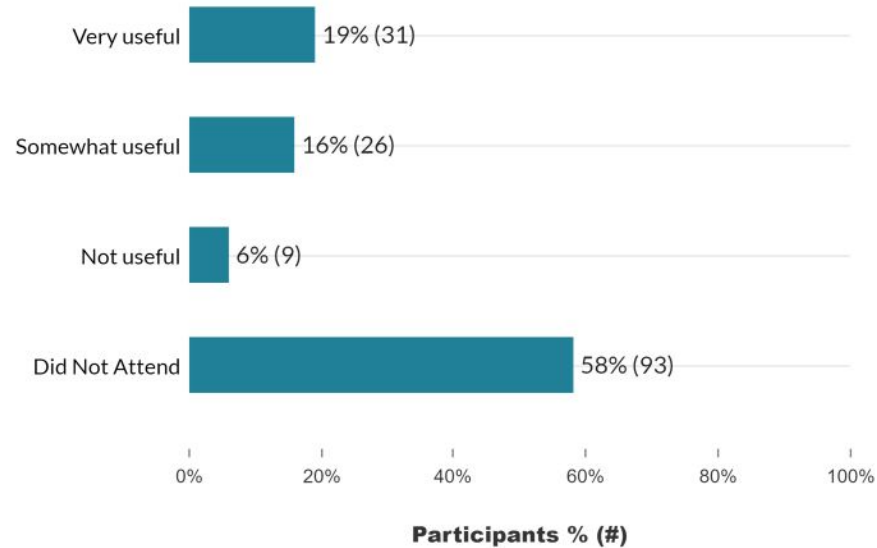


Get Connected - Jenn Carter



PARTICIPATION Breakdown of Participation

If you attended Scheduled Teacher Open House Presentations, how useful did you find them?



Get Connected - Jenn Carter




PARTICIPATION Breakdown of Participation

What was your preferred way to interact with teachers during Get Connected Day?



156
Responses

%		Answer <i>(Multiple select)</i>
23%	(36)	Scheduled presentations
63%	(98)	Informal meet-and-greet in classrooms
44%	(69)	Brief interactions (e.g., stopping by to say hello)
15%	(23)	Other

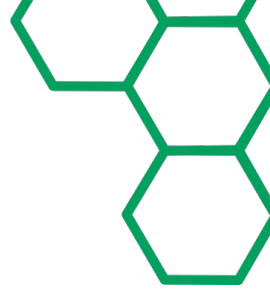
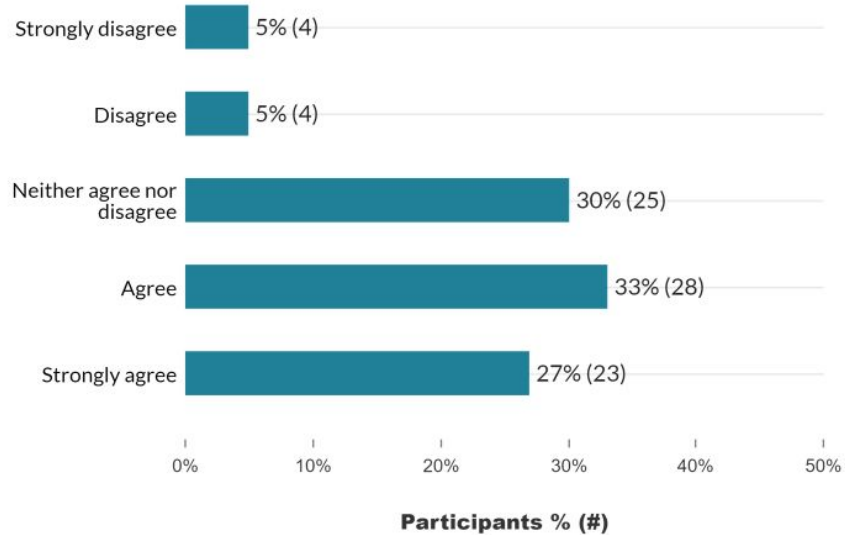


Get Connected - Jenn Carter



PARTICIPATION Breakdown of Participation

Did you think adding a Sensory Hour was a valuable use of time on Get Connected day?





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Connect & Assess



Connect & Assess - Dr. Cara Rieckenberg



Benefits of Connect & Assess - Family Feedback

1. Fostering Relationships:

- **Connection with Teachers:** Parents and students greatly value the opportunity to meet teachers one-on-one, helping establish rapport and ease any first-day jitters. This personal interaction allows both parties to share insights about the child, fostering a supportive environment.
- **Building Comfort:** Students, especially younger ones or those new to the school, benefit from becoming familiar with their classroom and teacher, which helps reduce anxiety about starting the school year.

2. Understanding Student Needs:

- **Individualized Insights:** These days provide a crucial opportunity for teachers to assess each child's strengths, needs, and learning styles in a relaxed setting, allowing for more tailored instruction from day one.
- **Parent Engagement:** Parents appreciate being able to discuss their child's background, quirks, and any specific concerns, leading to better understanding and collaboration with educators.

Connect & Assess - Dr. Cara Rieckenberg



Benefits of Connect & Assess - Family Feedback

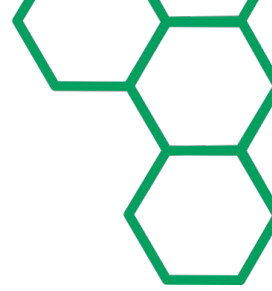
3. Preparation for the School Year:

- **Calm Introduction:** Having time dedicated to meet with teachers and visit classrooms helps students transition more smoothly into the school routine, making them feel prepared and supported.
- **Logistical Benefits:** It allows families to complete necessary paperwork and turn in forms in a less hectic environment before the school year starts.

4. Collecting Baseline Data:

- **Assessment Opportunity:** The days serve as an efficient way for teachers to gather initial assessment data outside of regular class time, enabling them to make informed decisions on grouping and instruction early in the year.

Connect & Assess - Dr. Cara Rieckenberg



Benefits of Connect & Assess - Family Feedback

5. Community and Familiarization:

- **School Environment:** Parents and students appreciate the chance to familiarize themselves with the school layout and meet other staff members, which enhances their overall comfort and sense of belonging within the school community.

6. Flexibility for Families:

- **Convenient Scheduling:** Holding Connect and Assess Days on Fridays and Mondays allows families to plan around weekends, accommodating varying schedules and making participation more accessible.

***Overall, Connect & Assess Days are viewed as a valuable initiative that supports both student readiness and parental engagement, creating a strong foundation for the upcoming school year.*

Connect & Assess - Dr. Cara Rieckenberg



Concerns of Connect & Assess - Family Feedback

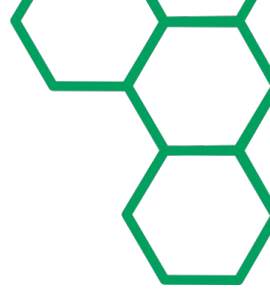
1. **Summer Activities:** A significant number of parents expressed concern that Friday conflicts with end-of-summer family trips and camps, making it challenging to attend. Many families felt that Monday and Tuesday were better suited for wrapping up summer activities and managing childcare.
2. **Childcare Needs:** Some parents highlighted the increased difficulty in arranging childcare with the new schedule, as summer programs often end before the school year starts.
3. **Preference for Timing:** Several respondents preferred having Connect and Assess Days closer to the actual start of school, suggesting that Monday and Tuesday offered better preparation for students.

Neutral and Indifferent Responses:

- A portion of parents indicated indifference, stating that either schedule worked for them or that they had no strong feelings about the change.

Overall Impression: While some families embraced the new schedule for its flexibility and convenience, others preferred the traditional Monday and Tuesday format, citing issues related to summer activities and childcare. The diversity of opinions highlights the need for ongoing feedback to ensure that the scheduling meets the varying needs of all families.

Connect & Assess - Dr. Cara Rieckenberg



Feedback from Certified Staff

Positive Aspects:

- Many appreciated the separation of Connect and Assess Days from the first day of school, finding it less overwhelming and more beneficial for preparation.
- The extra day allowed teachers to review data, plan effectively, and connect with families before students arrived, making them feel more organized and less rushed.
- Several noted that having a day in between was helpful for regrouping and processing information, enhancing their engagement and effectiveness.

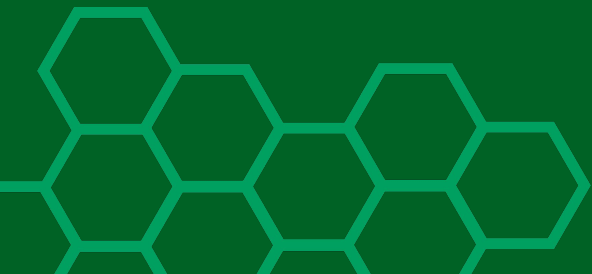
Concerns:

- Some teachers highlighted issues with family availability on Fridays



QUESTIONS?

Edina Public Schools





THANK YOU

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